

## CHAPTER XII

### MOTHER-KIN AND MOTHER GODDESSES

#### § I. *Dying Gods and Mourning Goddesses*

WE have now concluded our Inquiry Into the nature and Essential worship of the three Oriental deities Adonis, Attis, and <sup>^m^</sup>Osiris. The substantial similarity of their mythical character Attis, and justifies us In treating of them together. All three appar- <sup>Osins\*</sup>ently embodied the powers of fertility in general and of vegetation In particular. All three were believed to have died and risen again from, the dead ; and the divine death and resurrection of all three were dramatically represented at annual festivals, which their worshippers celebrated with alternate transports of sorrow and joy, of weeping and exultation. The natural phenomena thus mythically conceived and mythically represented were the great changes of the seasons, especially the most striking and impressive of all, the decay and revival of vegetation ; and the Intention of the sacred dramas was to refresh and strengthen, by sympathetic magic, the failing energies of nature, in order that the trees should bear fruit, that the corn should ripen, that men and animals should reproduce their kinds. But the three gods did not stand by themselves. The <sup>Thesuperi-</sup>mythical personification of nature, of which all three were <sup>^oddestes<sup>6</sup></sup> in at least one aspect the products, required that each of associated <sup>them</sup> should be coupled with a goddess, and in each case it <sup>^onis,</sup> appears that originally the goddess was a more powerful Attis, and and Important personage than the god. At all events it Is <sup>pOjnts</sup> to a always the god rather than the goddess who comes to a sad system of end, and whose death Is annually mourned. Thus, whereas kin.

Osiris was slain by Typhon, his divine spouse. Isis survived.